



Jason Dohring Talks MOONLIGHT

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By: Amrie Cunningham

Readers of theTVaddict.com, and my column in particular [\[My Take on TV\]](#), know that there are few things I enjoy more than watching Jason Dohring do his thing (eating pizza from Frank's in Lansdale, swooning over a certain Piemaker, and sleeping are probably the only three things that might tie for top 4 activities). Cut to me, trying to hold back on the gushing over Mr. Dohring on a great, informal conference call to celebrate new episodes of his show (one of my favorites this season), Moonlight. As fabulous on the phone as he is in person, Jason spent some time answering questions about the difference between Josef and Logan, the possibilities of some lovin' for his character, the truly terrifying, albeit unconventional, fear he has, and how he prepares for a role.

How is the experience on Moonlight different from your experience on Veronica Mars?

Yeah, there's a couple things I guess. The characters are obviously a bit different. You know, I think, they both have really interesting stories. Josef was kind of the expansion of a character, it's like the 400 years aspect, as we'll find more about as the story unfolds. There's so much history. As an actor, each new script that comes out, you kind of add to that. You don't know beforehand, when you first started, what your history is, but you sort of learn as you do it. You're sort of picking that up and putting that in your character as you go. So I think it adds more to the storyline like that. And I think, just being on CBS is quite a bit different. It's a bigger cast. You're at Warner Bros which is quite close to my house so I don't have to trek down to San Diego, which is kind of nicer. Just those two aspects more than anything else.

Do you know if the show will be delving more into his past, more of his past loves and how he managed to become so successful?

Absolutely. I think the successful thing [came] more in the first episode, with the hedge fund trader, and the real estate. In the episode this Friday, you find out basically why he's always concerned about Mick dating humans and being with humans, like what is that? There's basically a personal reason that Josef's gone through. I don't know if it's proper or whatever, but I always kind of take the idea that maybe Josef has gone through what Mick's going through. Maybe one time he was a good person, and you'll sort of see glimpses of that, you know, with my former hairstyle, and my really nice suit in New York in this week's episode.

How do you prepare for a role like this, where you're sort of eternally young and going through these things?

I can't quite help that, because I just am young, ya know what I mean? As far as the role, it's an ongoing thing. You can study all the things on the vampires for as long as you can live in LA. There's so many books on it. We kind of have our own code, and before we even started, I was reading some Ann Rice books, getting a feel of what vampires are like, why are they different from humans. I think there's a lot to do with "esp", they can tell when other vampires are nearby, they can tell who are humans, they can perceive what's really going on, and these are really cool character elements for an actor to work on. I'm very happy to be able to have that opportunity. Every actor wants to play a vampire.

What about the character made him interesting to you?

It came to me, as basically two pages, was the audition scene. So originally it was an older guy and they hadn't finished the script yet, so the two pages I got was essentially the first scene that was in the pilot episode, on the phone, and I'm sort of talking to Mick and he comes in. I was immediately fascinated with the character. Very, very, very sharp, you know? I don't know, very

keen, has a very hard edge. And then, I guess as it sort of develops, you got more that the writers do their thing, and you get more backstory and get familiar with the character and you see where he's been, what the history was, that led to becoming who he is. It just gets more interesting over time, but it started out cool.

Josef is so paranoid about the humans finding out about the vampire community. Are we ever going to get into how he gets a hold of his staff (some who are human, some who are vampires), and how he keeps all of them, to keep the [vampirism] from getting out?

I think at some point, if it gets too out of hand, people are just like "come on please" and it doesn't become believable. I think he has a lot of poise. He's able to keep his guys at bay. I don't know to what degree he disposes of these guys. There was talk in the earlier episodes that he was ruthless guy. Then you see that maybe he does have humanity. I think it would be an interesting point. Mostly he just bankrolls them. I don't know I'll just make it up – he wipes them out afterwards.

Is Josef going to get a love interest?

That's fantastic man. You're going to find out. You'll see some really cool stuff in this next episode. I don't know if that's too much of a spoiler or whatever, but you'll definitely see some love interest. You'll see. I don't know how to explain it or whatever. I think he would. Like Logan, he's probably a tough guy to live with. There was an episode with Lola or whatever. They had the on again off again thing. I would really like to see someone that could match him, they fight, they get back together. I think it would be quite a passionate relationship.

How many episodes are left with the strike, what are we going to see, what does the future hold?

Les Moonves said a few days ago, some kind stuff about our show and The Big Bang Theory, about us coming back for a second season. I can't speak for the producers, but that was given in a press interview, which is obviously a good sign. There's a lot of plus points. Our show is one of two shows that have been up-trending in viewership. So obviously that's a good sign. We're right around 8 million, which is pretty high. Having CBS as backup, promo-ing the show, you're sitting there watching golf and see a promo, which helps out a lot. We just finished shooting number 12 about 3 or 4 days ago. It was very good. There's a vampire that comes that makes me look like a popper which is cool. It goes back in history. We have some great history, makeup and sets, and like an "old world, from a different time" feel to the show and the storyline comes out. I think it'll be really cool to see how it all turns out. Great makeup and George Washington hair and all that cool stuff. [Air date] is sometime in January. 11 and 12 will both air in January [January 4th and 11th].

Going past episode 12, do you know anything about what your character is expected to see?

It's pretty much in the formulistic stages, with regard to that. Obviously, there's no scripts written. There's some possible stuff. The one thing that I heard is basically a betrayal of Josef against Mick. Something Josef's been telling him all along is not true, and it's very important to Mick. That'll lead to some very cool stuff. There's some great stuff coming up. I'm so excited for you to see it. Particularly, in episode 11, I think you're going to fall in love with this one character, she's just unreal, this girl.

The next question kind of goes along with that – some of the readers of our site were interested in seeing Josef and Mick as possible enemies – is that something you'd want to play?

Oh absolutely, I'm always kind of in favor of changing things around. You can always come around. I think that would be great. He can stand up to the best of them, so I'd like to see him maybe tear me a new one ha.

A lot of the scenes that people have really responded to have been ones where there is real male camaraderie going on. Is there going to be more of that male bonding coming up? Or is that going to be fractured?

I hope it never gets to that. I think it's a part of who these guys are. A big part of why Josef is in the storyline at all is because he's somewhat of a mentor, a safe person that Mick can ask about certain experiences he's going through and how they relate to Josef's knowledge of the situation. They're the scenes that I enjoy the most. A lot of that banter back and forth. Hopefully, we'll get a lot more.

There's a lot of action on Moonlight and I was wondering if you expect to see Josef get in on the action?

All they had was me slipping on the rooftop so far, which is the extent of my action, I don't know if you saw that one, where I like jump up on the roof or whatever. I expect that there would be some more. I would love to see him get in a fight. I'd be curious to see how they write it. I think perhaps, he [frakking], oops, sorry about that [Editor's Note: it made him seem so normal, down to earth, and comfortable with himself to just let the F-word slip out...], just vamps out. He goes nuts. He just totally loses his mind. I think that would be so cool.

The blood on this show – what is that?

There's two generations. We got love handles from the first one. It was pure sugar and you just wake up feeling horrible so you have to change it. The new generation is pomegranate juice and

something else. It's a concoction that the props guys make up. Yeah, it's good. It's quite sweet. It's a little hard to keep a straight face when you're taking it down, but [adopts awesomely cocky attitude voice] that's why they pay us the big bucks.

Obviously, vampires have been the big fear of many for years. What is your own personal biggest fear?

Oh my God, that's a great question! It's funny. I think I would have to say looking around and seeing the way that the world is now as opposed to where it was 40 to 50 years ago, it's pretty crazy. It's funny for like a kid my age, growing up, because it's way different than my parents. They grew up with morals and manners and stuff like that and I look around at my friends and I think, damn, dude, where did that go and what happens when they have kids? Really, it's not a light matter. You look at 100s and 100s and 1000s of years, it's been that way, and in the last 40 or 50 years it's gone down man so it's like, damn you gotta pick it back up. That's scary to me.

Who are some of your favorite actors/actresses, who would you love to work with?

Dude, I always see movies and say "oh I would add that to my list" and then someone asks me and I can't think. Brando, Dean, and Clift. Those are all no longer here, but Kevin Kline would be awesome to work with. I'd love to work with Ryan Gosling, I think he's awesome. I think Jeff Bridges is unbelievable. I think he's very underrated. Alfred Molina I love. I think Meryl Streep is fantastic, I think she does amazing work. Jessica Lange is beautiful.

To go along with that question, if you could do anything in the world, any type of project, what would it be?

Gosh, I would probably do Shakespeare with the above guys. It would just be so amazing. The concepts in that, I don't know, just with my horrible answer to what am I scared of, they deal with concepts like that in Shakespeare, you know what I mean? He saw these things and he saw that sort of stuff, so when you get actors that can play that sort of thing. Like, did you guys see Love Actually? There's this scene with Emma Thompson. It breaks your heart, man. She's just talking to her husband, talking basically about this girl that he might be in love with or whatever, and then she totally lets it go, and goes on to the next thing and shuts it out of her life. You just go, oh my god, it just breaks your heart. I love those moments in acting. That's what I try to find sometimes. What that actually does, you take it on as a universal concept. You see like this kid who gets hit by his dad, but you really see that dude, and you see what that does to that kid. Then when you talk about it, it's a little bit different, if you can actually see what that does, what the ramifications are. That's why these great actors are so good, because they make you feel it man, and they see it. If you can see it, then you can put it in your act.

Do you have any upcoming movie projects?

I just messed around with some friends of mine. We did a little short film [called Struck] that you'll probably wind up seeing at some point. It's only about 7 minutes long. I play a guy that's not like any of these guys. It's a really lovely story. I think you'll see. I play like a really loose nice guy, and it's a little bit cool for a change of pace. There are a couple movies I might be working on soon. It more or less depends on the strike though. I can't be in the middle of a movie, and they call you back to work on this project and have to abandon the movie.

What are some shows that you watch on TV?

Oh boy, I really enjoy Deadwood. I enjoy The Office, Family Guy. Moonlight, Veronica Mars, I don't know, that's about it haha.

How do you prepare to play this part? Do you have a technique, do you use Method?

I suppose I just read it over and over and over and get my idea of things. I think what I said earlier is kind of like more how I approach it. If you can look at life, man if you can really see life, you can bring that sort of knowledge to your acting. Gosh, it's amazing man. I think the people that can't, don't get it, don't see that, are missing lots of things that they could bring to their work. I just read it over and over and kind of more, dramatize it. You take a little line or a little piece of something and you look at it a bunch of different ways, you can add a story to it yourself if it's not in the script and make it bigger for yourself. And then when you say it...you know what I mean? If you're talking about, say your father, who is never mentioned before and that sort of thing, what that relationship is like, you know, so when you talk about it, you know. People feel that. When people are just talking to you in their everyday life and they're talking to you about experiences that they've had, you get what they're talking about, what they're looking at when they're talking to you. I think it's great that as an actor you can create it how you want. It's very creative; it doesn't leave you in the past. Method is, I don't know. It's just the people I've seen do it, I don't know, I don't want to say anything I guess because there's people that do it with great success. I think there's another way to do it that it's not so hard on yourself. You can take it and make it whatever you want, based on your ideas of life, or your ideas about that certain situation. You can create it whatever way you want, based on the story, and how you want it to be looked at and what you want people to feel from it. It's beautiful actually.

You don't take anything from your life, you'd rather imagine it?

Yeah, totally, but not to the point where it's like, oh I don't know about that, when I do? If I've seen something in my life, I know what that's like. I'm not going to not use my knowledge of life, you know what I mean? I don't consciously go back to that moment and feel that pain. It's like, yeah I know what it's like to be broken up with; I know what that feels like. It's like [frakking] time just caves in on you, it's [frakking] unbelievable. It's the worst feeling in the [frakking] world or

when you break up with somebody else. You see that all the time in drama, and if you really look at it, it's probably one of the top five worst things that's ever happened to you and if you look at it like that, you really look at it, you come up with some really special stuff for those moments.

I read somewhere that you have two sets of identical twin siblings. Is that true?

They're both identical, which doesn't run in the family, like we don't have twins anywhere in the family, like it's not hereditary. We don't have twins anywhere in the family, so it's like one in a million chance.

Thank you guys so much, I really appreciate it, thanks for letting me talk about the acting for a little bit!

He's every bit as swoon-worthy as one might think. Not only that, he's smart. He's got a great head on his shoulders. I'm not alone in my thinking when I say that he's definitely on his way, definitely going places, and I am (and I'm sure the lot of you Jason fans are, too) going to follow him wherever he goes!

Don't forget to watch the new episode of Moonlight, Friday night at 9 on CBS and you still have time to vote for Moonlight as your favorite new drama for the [People's Choice Awards](#)

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